DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 466 990 CE 083 588

AUTHOR	Ewens, David
TITLE	Observation of Teaching and Learning in Adult Education: How To Prepare for It, How To Do It and How To Manage It.
INSTITUTION	Learning and Skills Development Agency, London (England).; National Inst. of Adult Continuing Education, Leicester (England).
SPONS AGENCY	Department for Education and Skills, London (England).
ISBN	ISBN-1-85338-712-6
PUB DATE	2001-00-00
NOTE	73p.; Part of the Adult and Community Learning Quality Support Programme.
AVAILABLE FROM	Learning and Skills Development Agency, Regent Arcade House, 19-25 Argyll Street, London W1F 7LS, United Kingdom (Ref. No. A1165). Tel: 020 7297 9000; Fax: 020 7297 9001; Web site: http:/ /www.lsda.org.uk/home.asp. For full text: http://www.lsda.org.uk/pubs/dbaseout/download.asp?code=A1165.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom (055)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Adult Education; *Classroom Observation Techniques; *Community Education; Educational Change; *Educational Improvement; *Educational Quality; Foreign Countries; Program Implementation; Self Evaluation (Individuals); Student Evaluation; Teacher Evaluation
IDENTIFIERS	*United Kingdom

ABSTRACT

This booklet is the second in a series of publications written for the United Kingdom adult and community learning (ACL) sector to assist it in improving quality. An introduction covers the rationale for observing teaching and learning in a self-assessment context. Chapter 1 concentrates on the practicalities and processes of observing teaching and learning (OTL), including how OTL information might be fed into a self-assessment report. It suggests activities for "trainee observers" that can be followed or adapted to help carry out or revise processes for OTL. Chapter 2 examines how the introduction of a system of OTL might be managed with suggestions for implementing or adapting a system of observing teaching and learning. Chapter 3 applies theory to practice through a case study. It includes a checklist for change and a way of starting calculations to cost a new system and set targets. Appendixes include 21 references and example OTL forms and guidance, session plans, and pre-observation meeting form. (YLB)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 466 990

NIACE
THE NATIONAL ORGANISATION FOR ADULT LEARNING

learning and skills development agency

observation of teaching and learning in adult education

how to prepare for it, how to do it and how to manage it

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
M.F. Nowocin
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
1

David Ewens

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CE 083 588

adult and community learning
quality support programme

A 3-year programme to support ACL providers to meet quality requirements of inspection and funding agencies and improve their provision. It is run by the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA) in partnership with the National Institute of Adult and Continuing Education (NIACE) and is funded by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). The programme includes an advice and information service, a website, quality improvement networks, staff development workshops and consultancy, development projects and case studies. Details of the programme, extra copies of this guide and back-up materials are available on the website www.qualityACL.org.uk

Further guides and workshops are planned on:

- managing the observation of teaching and learning
- equal opportunities
- getting learner feedback
- involving part-time staff in the quality agenda
- fit-for-purpose systems for small providers

learning and skills development agency

observation of teaching and learning in adult education

how to prepare for it, how to do it and how to manage it

David Ewens

Published by the
Learning and Skills Development Agency

www.LSDA.org.uk

Feedback should be sent to:
Information Services,
Learning and Skills Development Agency,
3 Citadel Place, Tinworth Street, London SE11 5EF.
Tel 020 7962 1066 Fax 020 7962 1258
enquiries@LSDA.org.uk

Registered with the Charity Commissioners

Editor: Karin Fancett
Designers: Dave Shaw and Joel Quartey
Printer: Blackmore Ltd, Shaftesbury, Dorset

ISBN 1 85338 712 6

© Learning and Skills Development Agency 2001

A1165/11/01/3000

You are welcome to copy this publication
for internal use within your organisation.
Otherwise, no part of this publication may
be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system,
or transmitted in any form or by any means,
electronic, electrical, chemical, optical,
photocopying, recording or otherwise, without
prior written permission of the copyright owner.

Note
The Learning and Skills Development Agency
was formerly known as FEDA.

Further information
For further information on the issues discussed
in this publication please contact:
David Ewens, Development Adviser,
Adult and Community Learning Quality Support Programme,
Learning and Skills Development Agency,
3 Citadel Place, Tinworth Street, London SE11 5EF.
Tel 020 7840 5348 Fax 020 7840 5401
dewens@LSDA.org.uk

Contents

	Terms and abbreviations used	
	Acknowledgements	
	Preface	
	Introduction	1
	Why observe teaching and learning?	1
	Observing teaching and learning	3
	Establishing the nature of 'good practice' in teaching and learning in ACL and developing observation and other forms	3
	Who observes?	5
	The process of OTL	8
	The importance of a protocol in an OTL system	17
	How a system of observation of teaching and learning relates to the SAR	18
	Implementing a system of teaching and learning observation	19
	Introducing or adapting an OTL system in the ACL context	19
	Overview of change management	20
	Planning change	20
	A stepped approach to change	22
	Management styles, strategies and tactics in implementing change	23
	Resistance to change and how to overcome it	25
	Applying theory to practice	29
	A case study – Narnshire LEA	29
	The case study and management of change theory	38
	Conclusion	45
	References and bibliography	47
Appendix 1	Buckinghamshire County Council OTL forms and guidance	49
Appendix 2	Session plans – original and revised to address CIF questions	61
Appendix 3	Pre-observation meeting form	64

Terms and abbreviations used

ACL adult and community learning

ALI Adult Learning Inspectorate

CIF Common Inspection Framework

FEFC Further Education Funding Council

FENTO Further Education National Training Organisation

LEA local education authority

learning situations it might be easier to say classes (too formal for some ACL), lessons (too school-like) – but learning situations captures the variety of what is going on in the sector

LSC Learning and Skills Council

LSDA Learning and Skills Development Agency

NIACE National Institute of Adult and Continuing Education

Ofsted Office for Standards in Education

OTL observation of teaching and learning

PAULO the national training organisation for community-based learning and development

SAR self-assessment report

sessions this is occasionally used as an alternative to learning situations

tutors this term is more popular in ACL than teachers, lecturers, facilitators, group leaders or trainers, and is used throughout the booklet for consistency.

VCO voluntary and community organisation

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Anne Anthony of Buckinghamshire County Council for useful advice and for material on Bucks CC OTL material, Mark Ravenhall of NIACE for the 'Narnshire' case study framework, Pauline Nashashibi of LSDA for input on how to cost and set targets for an ACL system, and Anna Reisenberger and Annie Merton for advice on the text.

Preface

This booklet is the second in a series of publications written for the adult and community learning (ACL) sector to assist it in improving quality. In the introduction and three subsequent chapters it covers the following:

- the rationale for observing teaching and learning in a self-assessment context
- observing teaching and learning (the process and related issues)
- managing change: suggestions for implementing or adapting a system of observing teaching and learning
- applying theory to practice through a case study.

The first chapter concentrates on the practicalities and processes of observing teaching and learning (OTL), including how OTL information might be fed into a self-assessment report (SAR). It also suggests activities for 'trainee observers', and perhaps tutors newly subject to observation, that you can follow or adapt to help you carry out or revise processes for OTL. The second chapter examines how the introduction of a system of OTL might be managed and the third chapter applies theory to practice through a case study. The third chapter also includes a checklist for change and a way of starting calculations to cost a new system and set targets.

The guide cannot be prescriptive because of the diversity of the sector and the many different patterns of delivering adult and community learning – either directly through LEAs, through partnerships where provision is secured by contract, or by combinations of these models. It tries to address the needs of all ACL providers more by stimulating consideration of the relevant issues than by seeking to be all things to all people.

Introduction

Why observe teaching and learning?

Adult education has always been committed to learners, and the relationship between tutors and learners has been central to the ethos of adult learning. But how do we know whether learners are getting the best possible experiences? There has been a history of observing classes, workshops and other teaching and learning sessions as part of stage 1 and stage 2 tutor training. Some local authorities and large free-standing adult education providers have introduced periodic observations as a means of improving the quality of provision they fund. But until now there has been little external interest in monitoring adult learners' experiences. Only a quarter of LEAs have been inspected by Ofsted since 1993 and only those classes funded by the FEFC or under contract to the Training and Enterprise Council were covered by FEFC or Training Standards Council inspection.

The situation has now changed. The Learning and Skills Act 2000, as well as 'unifying' the various strands of the post-16 sector under the national Learning and Skills Council (LSC), has put an increased emphasis on the importance of learners and their experiences. This is highlighted in a number of documents on quality coming from the LSC but specifically in *Raising standards in post-16 learning: self-assessment and development plans* (ALI/ES/LSC/Ofsted 2001, page 10, paragraph 33):

> *The new arrangements have been designed to ensure that the interests of the learner come first and are of paramount importance*

1

with various conditions laid down

> *to achieve the objective of 'placing the learner at the heart of the system'.*

To achieve this objective of putting learners first, the LSC requires providers to make improvements in quality by producing annual SARs and development plans. This process will be supported by an inspection regime underpinned by the CIF agreed by Ofsted and the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI). The overall aim is not simply to prove a certain standard of provision but to demonstrate continuous improvement through reflection and action.

Since the renewed emphasis is on learners and the quality of their learning experiences, it is logical that there should be a focus on examining and judging quality of learning wherever it takes place. Therefore a robust system for observing it is required.

Two final points conclude this chapter. First, quality is inextricably linked with funding. Consistently good quality teaching and learning will be rewarded by local LSCs through the 'provider performance review' process. Satisfactory provision will trigger support in devising improvement strategies. Unsatisfactory provision may ultimately mean sanctions. OTL is therefore not just about proof of quality but also about delivering continuous improvement. Second, it is providers who are responsible for the quality of their direct provision and that secured by contract to their partners. It therefore follows that there should be a uniform OTL system across a whole ACL service.

Observing teaching and learning

Establishing the nature of 'good practice' in teaching and learning in ACL and developing observation and other forms

When you are setting up a system of OTL you will need to address all areas of the teaching and learning cycle – analysing learner need, preparing for teaching and learning (including planning and resource development), delivery (teaching, mentoring, coaching, training, tutoring, facilitating), assessment and evaluation. To do this, you might need to go back to first principles by considering with your team of observers what good practice is in ACL and then develop a form for OTL on the basis of the good practice you have established. If you already have a quality system and an accompanying OTL system, now is a good time to adapt it so that it is in line with current requirements.

Another more 'root and branch' approach might be to take the opportunity of looking at national standards relating to teaching and learning (eg the FENTO standards) and pick out the ones relevant to classroom observations. Some FE colleges have already done this and have based observation forms on these standards, but for ACL FENTO standards might not be a very good 'fit'. PAULO standards for community work may ultimately be more relevant but are not yet fully developed.

A useful alternative might be to consider the 'key questions' and related evaluation and judgement criteria of the CIF that relate to teaching and learning. This is the approach of Buckinghamshire County Council and has resulted in the 'Teaching observation report' form in Appendix 1. This also takes account of the ALI's draft guidelines on the CIF to ACL providers. One great advantage of this approach is that it is relatively straightforward in that there is less bulky detail in the CIF than in some of the national standards.

Another advantage is that the information that emerges from the observations that go towards SARs will closely match what the ALI will be looking for when one of its teams comes to inspect. In effect, everyone will be talking the same language – inspectors, managers and, if the OTL system has been skilfully implemented, tutors. 'Ownership' of the system is very important to its success, a theme that will be considered in later chapters.

Activity 1 on observation forms

Note
These exercises are suggestions and can be selected and/or adapted according to organisational need.

1. **Split your group of trainee observers into small groups to explore what makes up good practice in teaching and learning. Use the consensus in a subsequent plenary discussion to develop a checklist.**
2. **Explore with the group relevant national standards and their use in developing observation forms.**
3. **Investigate observation forms in the post-16 sector (including those used in FE colleges) to inform the development or the adoption of a form for your organisation and your partners.**
4. **Map the findings of 1, 2 and 3 to the requirements of the CIF.**
5. **Select the parts of the key questions of the CIF relevant to teaching and learning.**
6. **Develop a form for your ACL setting.**

Just as you and your observation team may need to adapt or develop observation to take into account new self-assessment and inspection requirements, so you may also wish to look at related forms and documents, particularly session plans, which should also take into account relevant parts of the CIF key questions. Inserting spaces for responses to questions such as 'How will you provide equal opportunities for your learners in this session?', 'How are you addressing the learning styles of each of your learners?' and 'How can you arrange the classroom (or workshop) environment to maximise learning?' are potentially powerful 'levers of change'. They will make tutors think about these issues before, during and after observations – as well as raising staff development issues. In other words,

this process may lead you to think about how to implement a training programme for observers and tutors so that they can recognise the different learning styles among learners – and then address their particular learning needs. Appendix 2 shows a basic session plan that is then adapted to meet CIF requirements.

Activity 2 on session plans

With your 'trainee observers' revise your organisation's standard session plan form on the basis of best practice in the post-16 sector and mapped against the relevant CIF 'key questions'. You will need to address classroom layout, equal opportunities and learning styles.

Who observes?

We have already referred to your 'observation team', but who should be in it? Figure 1 identifies who the members of the team might be. Various models and approaches have emerged and evolved for identifying observers, and different organisations have different practices. The issue of grading is dealt with in more detail later in this chapter. As far as qualifications are concerned, observers should usually have at least a Certificate in Education or equivalent and would perhaps gain more credibility from a degree in education. Assessor and verifier qualifications are useful because they indicate experience in making objective and validating judgements. There are many purposes for OTL as well as its part in preparing an SAR on the quality of teaching and learning. For example, peer observations, if done properly, help both parties and will rarely lead to anything but improved quality of teaching and learning. Consider Figure 1 and, if you have an observation system currently working, decide how it might be adapted, improved or expanded. If you are starting from scratch, decide what sort of approach would be appropriate for your organisation.

Figure 1 People who might undertake OTL for self-assessment purposes

Observers	Other purposes
Line managers	To fit in with appraisal process; to satisfy external contractual arrangements (eg with an LEA); to judge competence issues (but not within self-assessment framework)
Curriculum coordinators; tutor organisers	To provide support within a curriculum area (most purposes are linked to self-assessment)
Fellow tutors	For personal and professional development, usually outside a curriculum area
Commissioned consultants (including part-time registered inspectors) from outside organisations	To provide external validation of an observation system's results. For proof as much as for continuous improvement
Colleagues from partner organisations within the LEA	To provide external validation and develop staff from other organisations, and to share good practice
Teacher education staff	To generate evidence for unqualified or partially qualified tutors to gain teaching qualifications

Issues of status, qualifications and credibility etc	Do they grade?
Observer should be sufficiently qualified and experienced. Observation by line manager may be more stressful than observation by others	Yes, but not necessarily. May use local methods linked to performance management review or conditions laid down by funder
Observer should be sufficiently qualified and experienced. Observation may be less stressful if by than line/centre manager	Yes, if for self-assessment, but there may be other locally agreed criteria. Not necessarily compulsory for self-assessment
Status not so much an issue as mutual respect. Credibility will come from good practice and the experience and reputation of the tutor. Subjectivity might be higher. Observation should be less stressful	Usually not, but possible if accepted as part of a self-assessment team or if agreed with tutor. The emphasis is on detailed qualitative feedback
Status, qualifications and credibility are important issues for an activity to do with judgement as much as development. Objectivity likely to be high. Observation could be stressful	Yes, but not necessarily – depends on the requirements of the organisation
More important than status is the self-development of participants. Observation should be less stressful	Not so likely – but could still provide useful evidence for self-assessment reports
Observation should not be too stressful and should be supportive and developmental	Depends on structure of qualification – but still useful for self-assessment

The process of OTL

The actual process of OTL is quite straightforward and can normally be split into four distinct parts:

- preparing for observation (by both observer and tutor being observed)
- conducting the observation
- discussing the performance, giving feedback and awarding the grade (if grading is going to be a part of your OTL system)
- agreeing and implementing an action plan for organisational self-assessment and individual continuing professional development purposes.

Preparing for observation

Some organisations place more emphasis on this stage than others, presumably on the grounds of the four Ps – Poor Planning leads to Poor Performance. Pre-observation planning can often involve a short meeting between observer and tutor being observed to discuss the nature of the course being taught, to examine the session plan, scheme of work and assessment schedule, and to look at resources. It is also an opportunity to remind both parties of the criteria by which the performance is going to be judged.

Observations themselves are more likely to be successful if both parties contribute to making the experience constructive, and a pre-meeting can be ideal for this. The tutor can put the lesson or learning activity into context. The observer can ask questions and get additional information, clarify observation protocols and criteria, and sort out feedback times. In the ACL context such a meeting can be even more important because there can be less obvious formality than in other settings and because there may be an emphasis on negotiating learning outcomes with learners. A pre-meeting might establish that originally unintended learning outcomes have emerged and that aspects of an original course outline or scheme may have become redundant or less relevant. Developing a short form for use in a pre-observation meeting would be quite straightforward (see Appendix 3) but might add an unnecessary bureaucratic layer to the process. However, it is certainly worthwhile providing summary advice ('Before the visit you should') for observers and tutors, as demonstrated in the guidance notes in Appendix 1.

Conducting the observation

Actually undertaking an observation could be considered a beguilingly straightforward process. Your observers will be working on your previously developed or adapted form, which will have prompts for their notes, and the notes will form the basis for feedback. Observers will have established in the pre-observation meeting what they need to see, and session plan forms will have been adapted to meet CIF standards. However, observation and report writing do require subtle skills.

Observers should be trained to stand or sit somewhere that provides a good view of tutor and learner activities. This position may change as a class continues but observers should try to be unobtrusive at all times. They should be able to look at learners' work and speak to them (the latter more normally happening outside a session and requiring particular subtlety and sensitivity). They should look at registers for attendance and retention patterns. It is useful to see a whole tutoring session so that its coherence is apparent, including how the beginning relates to the end and whether there is a balance of activities. Short of this, the pre-observation meeting or agreement should establish what it is most fruitful to observe. Naturally, observers should not participate or interrupt a tutoring session unless a safety issue arises.

Observers develop different styles of recording observations. Forms with lists of prompts are often very useful for achieving focus. However, they can also interrupt the 'flow' of thoughts so that vital points are missed as the observers make 'trawls' of the headings. It is often more helpful to have a space on a form to record an observation in narrative form. Experienced consultants and observers frequently itemise reports into numbered narratives, recording interesting or important incidents and interpreting and analysing them against the given prompts or framework afterwards. In this way, tutors' distinctive styles and approaches to their work are addressed more sympathetically and the reports themselves are fresher and therefore more meaningful and useful. Quotes, questions and comments recorded roughly word for word can help with feedback and lead to a deeper analysis.

In the end, different observers develop different approaches, with increasing experience leading to less reliance on prompts. This is surely acceptable so long as there is consistency across the observation team in the award of grades. There may be a case for differentiating between basic and advanced levels of observer training.

Grading observations

Whether or not to use a grading system is a knotty problem for an organisation's senior managers. In Appendix 1, Buckinghamshire County Council has opted to grade. The CIF 1–7 grading system agreed by Ofsted and ALI (Appendix 1 and ALI/Ofsted 2001b) might or might not become an integral part of the observation process in your organisation and its partners. When an ALI inspection team comes to inspect ACL provision in the 4 year cycle it will look at your SARs with the grades (from 1 to 5) you have awarded for every 'area of learning' your provision covers and will be interested in how you arrived at them. However, this does not automatically mean that your internal self-assessment observations have to be graded according to the 1 to 7 system. Grading of observations might possibly make it easier to establish an area of learning grade by aggregating grades and other data into one final grade. However, the qualitative data from actual observation reports could easily by themselves contribute to the final grade. You might ask yourself, will grading enhance the aim of self-assessment and continuous improvement or does it detract from the qualitative message of the observation report? Excellent grades or poor ones could equally cause tutors to gloss over feedback and not hear the rest of the message.

Whether or not you and your organisation are going to grade, your observers need to look at issues such as:

- learner need and ability in relation to tutoring and learning activities
- the appropriateness of session content and approach
- how challenging the work is
- the progress that learners make (ie the 'attainment' referred to in the CIF).

The last point can be problematic in the context of ACL, particularly on non-accredited programmes, and as well as having funding implications, it may in itself raise the need for extra observer training. If you and your team are going to grade, the highest grade for an observed session need not mean that there were no weaknesses – just minor ones and substantial strengths. Similarly, the lowest grade signals that little learning has taken place. Always get your observers to remember that learning is more important than teaching in awarding grades (the former can occur effectively without the latter!). In addition, student activity does not necessarily equate with learning taking place. Of course, this remains true even without a grading system.

If you grade, you need to develop thorough criteria for giving grades on the CIF scale and they should be explicit for both tutors and observers. Identifying strengths and weaknesses deriving from assessment should lead to the award of an obviously appropriate grade. This is very important indeed so that the system is fair and transparent. As things stand, you need to develop your own criteria for each grade because at the moment no others exist. Activity 3 gives you an opportunity to do this.

Activity 3 on developing grade criteria

Using the ALI/Ofsted grade descriptions, work with 'trainee observers' and tutors to develop criteria for each grade using the form below and the observation form in Appendix 1.

Grade	Criteria for awarding grade
1 Excellent	
2 Very good	
3 Good	
4 Satisfactory	
5 Unsatisfactory	
6 Poor	
7 Very poor	

Discussing the performance and giving feedback

Feedback should generally be an affirming and encouraging process. Even if an observed session has been very poor, feedback should be constructive and used as a learning experience. It should happen soon after the observation, when the teaching and learning are fresh in the minds of both the tutor and observer, but a little time should be allowed for both to reflect. As observers gain experience, there is less need for a gap between observation and feedback. If the process cannot take place relatively soon after the observation (ie on the same day), there is a very real danger of 'drift' leaving feedback not given, a report unfinished and the self-assessment process in general undermined. It is worth emphasising again to your observers that the key focus is not so much on the teaching, tutoring, coaching or facilitation, but on the quality of the learning that has taken place. In a grading system the feedback should be firmly and observably related to the grade being given.

Active listening skills are vital for observers in the feedback situation. Such skills will encourage dialogue and may also clarify episodes and interactions in the observation situation. It is often irritating and inhibiting to sense that someone is only half attending to what you are saying while formulating her or his next sentence or comment. In the early stages of self-assessment, recently appointed tutors may be accepting of the new requirements. However, there may be anxiety and resistance among established tutors, so it is important to get all parts of the process right. The feedback stage is perhaps the most delicate and important. You should aim for self-assessment, and observation and grading of teaching and learning, to be an 'owned', transparent, supportive and accepted part of the landscape. If tutors do not exactly look forward to it with anticipation, then at least they will accept its usefulness and validity.

Observers should not flinch from difficult messages or be apologetic about conveying them. However, the notion of a 'criticism sandwich' is a useful one here. An observer can find something to praise, state a criticism unequivocally but then proceed with another item of praise. This could be construed as 'sweetening the pill', but skilfully done it will gain acceptance through reflection.

There will be times when tutors are not receptive to feedback, but if you have managed to introduce the self-assessment procedure and accompanying training properly and thoroughly then this problem should arise rarely. It is always important, as with difficult learners, to concentrate on behaviour rather than the people manifesting the behaviour, to be quietly but persistently assertive (and never aggressive), to listen actively and to focus on resolution and solution rather than problems. A task focus should not preclude support for a person.

There are three possible ways of giving feedback, depending on circumstances and the purpose of the feedback. The first approach begins with the tutor – asking that person how well a session went. This can backfire if the tutor replies 'really well' when your judgement was distinctly less optimistic! With this approach, it is useful to ask open questions that begin a dialogue: 'How do you think things went overall?' is probably a better starting point than 'Do you think the learners achieved all the objectives that you established between you at the beginning of the session?' After the dialogue, with more focused questions – 'What about the learning outcomes?',

'How do you think the resources worked?', 'How could you have handled that situation differently?', 'What about the questions you were asking?' – observers can then give an analysis of strengths and weaknesses, and a grade.

Either before or after this, observers can cover what worked well and what would need further development. An example of a comment about what worked well might be:

> *One of the aspects that emerged as a significant strength was your adaptability. The second activity clearly wasn't working but you retrieved the situation with some deft adjustments crisply explained to your learners. This adaptability was evident in other aspects of the session.*

An example of a comment on a practice requiring further development might be:

> *On two occasions your classroom management was rather diffident and uncertain. One was when the latecomer came in and interrupted the flow of the session with a somewhat dramatic entrance. The other was when one of the small groups doing that 'first thoughts' activity wandered from its task. You could have got the participants back on track sooner.*

The second approach suggests starting with a summary of strengths and weaknesses, using examples and illustrations from the session observed – 'Your questioning techniques were particularly strong – I could identify questions at the higher levels of cognition requiring learners to respond in analytical and evaluative ways which significantly stimulated their learning'. Tutors can then be invited to add their own comments before a summary, as in the first approach, of what went well and what needs attention.

The third approach starts with a chronological account of the session, going through good points and areas for attention. This can include (as with the other two approaches) checking points with a tutor to ensure that in the complexity of the session the observer has not missed or misinterpreted a key point or episode. The tutor can comment and discuss during the chronology or at the end. The pattern then follows the other two approaches.

Less experienced observers will find it useful to have these approaches to hand in their early observations and assessments, together with their observation forms and grading criteria, which will be mainly used at the summary stage.

More experienced observers may well use a combination of the approaches while covering the ground that needs to be covered. Both could usefully remember the mnemonic 'COBS'. Feedback should be:

- Clear
- Owned
- Balanced
- Specific.

Activity 4 on conducting the observation, giving feedback and grading

Arrange a 20-minute micro-teaching situation and feedback for 'trainee observers' to witness from beginning to end. The process will involve an observer watching a tutor, doing a report and giving feedback and a grade.

Discuss the process at each stage with them. Establish any strengths and weaknesses observed and whether or not they agreed with the grade awarded.

(Alternatively, go through the process up to where the observer awards a grade and then get the group to discuss which grade it should be.)

Agreeing and implementing an action plan for organisational self-assessment and individual continuing professional development purposes

Once an observation has been completed and a grade awarded (if you are going to have a grading system), then an action plan can be agreed and completed between tutor and observer. This can include practicalities about the tutor's performance, plans for general or specific training, and issues for the organisation to address (eg to do with rooming and resourcing). Figure 2 shows a completed action plan, and Appendix 1 contains a blank action plan.

Figure 2 Completed action plan following observation

Action plan
Agreed action, including staff development identified

Action	By whom	By when
1 Attend forthcoming staff development event on 'learning styles'	K Jones (tutor)	12/12/01
2 Revamp handouts so they include more activities for learners	K Jones (tutor)	March 2002
3 Send details of final part of CertEd training	R Miller (observer)	14/12/01
4 Attend forthcoming staff development event on 'learning style'	K Jones (tutor)	30/11/01

Signed

Observer R Miller

Tutor K Jones Date 27/11/01

A well-established technique for deciding on action is to use SMART(ER) targets, that is targets that are:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Results-oriented
- Time-bound or time-specific
- (Evaluative)
- (Reviewable).

This is a natural end to the process of one observation, but also the beginning of a wider process. Many observations and grades (if you are going to have them) should lead not just to development of the individual but also to the dissemination of good practice through an institution. Good tutors can be invaluable as mentors and even develop their work and careers as observers themselves. Where weaknesses or areas for action are identified for individuals, further training or peer support can be planned.

Observations can highlight issues beyond the tutor such as resources and facilities, or issues to do with curriculum and course management that might be identified as weaknesses in a particular area of learning. Similarly, if there are the same consistent weaknesses in the teaching practice of a group of tutors, this should go as an identified weakness into the appropriate part of the SAR.

The importance of a protocol in an OTL system

It is important for you to establish a protocol for the process of OTL so that both tutors and observers are comfortable with it. What follows might be a starting point:

- Observers will be briefed and trained.
- Observations will involve 1 week's notice beforehand.
- Observations will last at least 45 minutes and not more than 1 hour.
- Observers will complete the agreed documentation and provide constructive feedback.
- 'Tutors' comments on the observation process will be welcomed.
- The OTL system will be regularly reviewed as part of the self-assessment process.
- Disputes over feedback or grades will go to the quality manager for appeal.
- Observations will be based on confidentiality, courtesy and objectivity.
- Students and staff will be respected at all times and prejudice and discrimination avoided at all times.

There are other protocol issues. Should observation times be negotiated and is there a choice of observer? Are guidelines for feedback clearly understood by everyone? How are disagreements dealt with? What about anonymity? These points need to be resolved according to circumstances in different ACL providers. The ALI and LSC requirements for self-assessment do not preclude you using any approaches that improve teaching and therefore enhance the quality of learners' experiences.

How a system of observation of teaching and learning relates to the SAR

The section on action planning suggested how OTL can help an organisation as well as individual tutors to develop. In practical terms, you will need to decide how you use the information you get from your OTL system. The list below indicates one way it might be done.

- A team of observers completes the agreed quota of tutor observations over an agreed timescale and covering the appropriate areas of learning.
- A system of moderation, perhaps with observers and moderators making some joint visits (adding relentlessly to cost and stress factors!), establishes consistency of feedback and grading (if grading is used).
- The strengths and weaknesses of tutors' work are established by curriculum leaders and managers on the basis of the moderated observation reports – either on a geographical, centre basis or by areas of learning.
- If grading is used, a profile of grades is established on the basis of the observations, again either on a centre basis or by areas of learning.
- **Either** individual centres and partners produce provisional SARs with all the data required, including OTL data, which is then 'fed into' the provider's SAR.
- **Or** individual centres or partners give the provider the information required and the provider integrates the data into an SAR including grades, strengths and weaknesses relating to the areas of learning.

This chapter has drawn heavily on the work of Dixon with Moorse (1998), Dixon with Walker (2000) and Nicholls (2000). These authors have produced comprehensive schemes, materials and ideas for the observation of teaching and learning in a college context, which is equally relevant in an ACL context.

Implementing a system of teaching and learning observation

Introducing or adapting an OTL system in the ACL context

A good and comprehensive system for observing teaching and learning is only part of the story. It has to be implemented skilfully, carefully and realistically so that it successfully and genuinely becomes the centrepiece of the self-assessment process.
There are a number of very real concerns in the ACL sector about introducing or adapting a current OTL system.

One of the most significant concerns is the resource implication. How will the whole thing be funded and managed? Another is dealing with the diversity of ACL provision in particular localities. Some LEA partners will be operating different quality systems while others will have little in the way of quality assurance at all. FE college partners may already have sophisticated OTL procedures in place.
How will this diversity be dealt with? Another concern centres on the part-time and voluntary nature of much of the work in ACL. Introducing an OTL system will require skill and sensitivity so that it is accepted and embraced by all tutors in all centres who contribute.

This chapter and the next cannot necessarily supply hard and fast solutions to these difficult issues, and the degree of access to various standards funds and local LSC financial support has not been completely finalised. However, the aim is to stimulate ideas and encourage approaches that will succeed.

Overview of change management

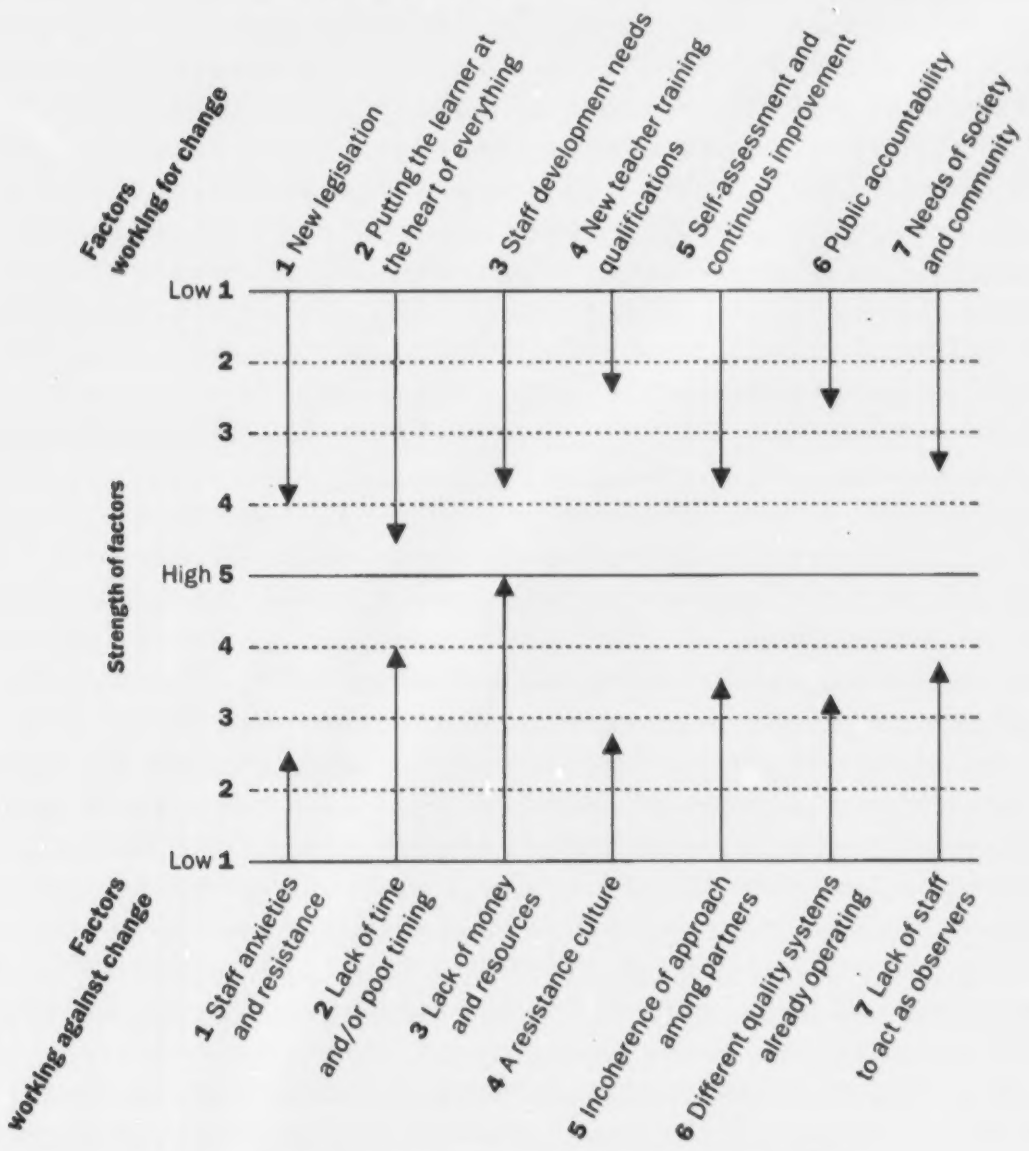
Organisations face different types of change – strategic, structural, process-oriented or people-centred – or a combination of these. Implementing or adapting a new system for OTL is derived from a strategic shift imposed on the post-compulsory sector involving self-assessment in general and the new inspection arrangements that put the learner at the heart of the system. Although these overall arrangements are externally triggered (in this case by new legislation), instituting a new OTL system is about a change in process and procedures and about changes affecting people. Because of the level of the change, it is more likely to be successfully led by middle and 'first line' managers, especially managers with responsibility for quality and staff development, though importantly they must be fully backed and supported by the senior members of the organisation and those of its partners.

Planning change

Change should be planned and anticipatory – taking into account what may occur outside and inside an organisation and its partners. This way the organisation and its partners are more able to predict results and control events, and thus there is more chance of success. Reactive rather than proactive management can lead to disaster.

A useful starting point for the change process is to devise a brief 'force field analysis' consisting of factors working for change and factors working against. Applied to introducing an OTL system, a force field analysis might look as in Figure 3.

Figure 3 Force field analysis of factors working for and against a new OTL system in LEA ACL

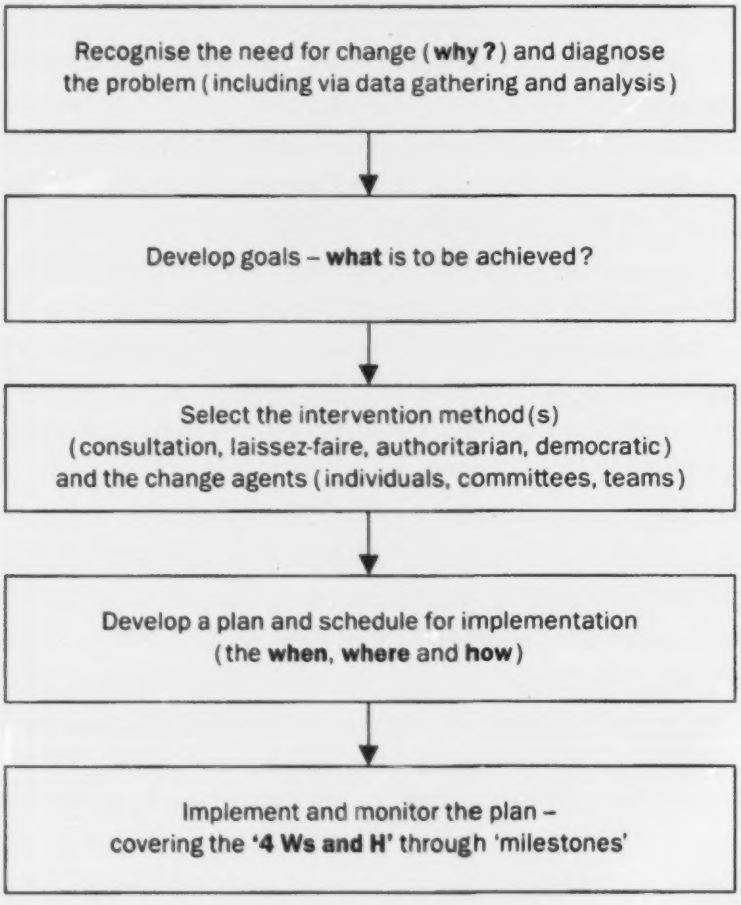


This quite rudimentary approach at least clarifies some of the issues and challenges and allows you to judge the relative importance of each factor.

A stepped approach to change

Adopting a stepped approach to change can usefully follow up the force field analysis. A five-step approach is shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4 Diagram showing change in steps


Recognise the need for change (**why?**) and diagnose the problem (including via data gathering and analysis)
Develop goals – **what** is to be achieved?
Select the intervention method(s) (consultation, laissez-faire, authoritarian, democratic) and the change agents (individuals, committees, teams)
Develop a plan and schedule for implementation (the **when**, **where** and **how**)
Implement and monitor the plan – covering the **'4 Ws and H'** through 'milestones'

One of the most important steps would be to establish in practical, costed terms what main target is required. A simple example is given in the Narnshire case study in the next chapter, and a form for you to use for your own planning is also given there, together with a planning checklist.

There is no doubt that a stepped approach looks extremely attractive in theory. The reality of change is, however, 'messy', and there are likely to be considerable overlaps in each of the identified processes. At least proper planning and implementation can obviate the worst effects of unpredictability.

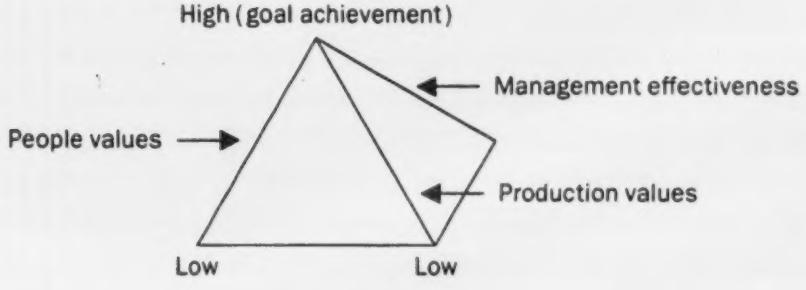
Management styles, strategies and tactics in implementing change

One particular style or a combination of styles can be used to introduce change such as a new OTL system. You will need to look at current styles, strategies used in the past and your organisational culture before deciding what approach to adopt in your circumstances. Consultation ('we discuss, I decide') is apt in many circumstances. A laissez-faire ('you get on with it') approach might be appropriate in an environment where each adult education service provider in an LEA is competent and autonomous. A democratic style ('we discuss, we decide') can be effective in certain conditions. Where change needs to be rapid, an authoritarian ('I decide') position is perhaps the most appropriate, but though you might need to consider this approach in the short term, it probably goes against the spirit of self-assessment in any other circumstance, and will eventually be self-defeating because of that.

Another approach is to look at change strategies. A rational strategy uses persuasion techniques on those subject to change, arguing that from observation and experience a particular course of action is clearly the most beneficial. 'You know it makes sense; it's logical' probably mostly sums up this approach. A 'power-coercive' strategy makes a change compulsory – 'just do it, or else!' A third approach is linked to the idea of a 'learning organisation' – that in order to embrace change, training, re-training and further training (or more root-and-branch education) are required. In many cases of change, the reality is that a mixture of strategies can be identified and this may well be so in the situation you are managing.

Linked to the ideas of general management styles and change strategies is a framework based on 'production' and 'people' values combined with management effectiveness. 'Impoverished management' is when there is little concern for people or the achievement of tasks ('production values'). The opposite of this is when managers emphasise both task and people. 'Country club management' is when people values are stressed to the detriment of getting on with the job, whereas 'autocratic task management' places too much value on finishing the job and not enough on the welfare of those who do it. Managers do not fall automatically and permanently into one category or another. Contingency and circumstances influence style. The diagram below (Figure 5) gives an impression of this framework.

Figure 5 People and production values in managers linked to management effectiveness
Adapted from Blake and Moulton, in Dixon 1997, page 66



Valuing people highly but maintaining a strong focus on the tasks to be accomplished is likely to mean that goals are successfully achieved, but this is not necessarily always so.

As far as change tactics are concerned, you could consider a number of options often linked with particular management styles. A 'Trojan mouse' approach introduces an apparently small-scale change into a whole organisation, which has great long-term consequences. For ACL, saying that a tutor will be observed once every 2 years seems innocuous but will have far-reaching consequences. Introducing change successfully into a unit or department of an organisation can create a momentum for change throughout, so if you have an outreach centre or a partner whose quality work is outstanding after your initial setting up, then you can use that model and the momentum it has produced elsewhere. Other tactics include objectives setting,

team development and sustained communication programmes so that there is full understanding of what is being aimed for. Offering skills development as an accompaniment to change, for example providing training to tutors who are to be observed, is often effective in securing commitment. Attention to contracts that incorporate requirements to undertake staff development, undergo classroom observation and to attend meetings is a more 'coercive' means of facilitating change than a more 'cooperative' approach that may have applied previously.

Resistance to change and how to overcome it

Resentment, anxiety, dissatisfaction and insecurity are often associated with change. People can be observed responding to it along a negative–conditional–positive continuum, from 'die-hards' at the negative end through to pragmatists in the middle and advocates at the positive end. An experienced and long-serving tutor of floristry in an adult education centre may take a 'die-hard' position by stating unequivocally that she is not going to be affected by OTL and will only participate to comply at a very rudimentary level. A basic skills tutor might take the stance of an 'ideologue' – 'an OTL system is against my beliefs and undermines my professionalism since I have spent many years training and building up my knowledge and expertise'. A 'pragmatic' creative writing tutor might submit to OTL – 'I might as well do what I have to – it won't hurt me and it might do some good'. A tutor–facilitator in an outreach group working with lone parents might advocate the OTL system – 'I am new to all this and having my work observed will give me pointers about how I can improve and that will improve my confidence no end'.

If the problems are identified, you should seek to apply the following techniques for overcoming resistance:

- participation – where everyone is encouraged to join in
- open, timely and accurate communication – to overcome fear and rumours
- advance warning – to prevent unsettling shocks and surprises
- sensitivity.

Figure 6 amplifies these points.

Figure 6 Implementation of change – ideas for good practice applied to an OTL system

Consultation

- It should be real, comprehensive and seen to make a difference. If tutors make important contributions they should be incorporated into an OTL scheme.
- The aim should be commitment and 'ownership' and not merely compliance.

Communication

- A 'Quality' newsletter and other communications should regularly circulate round LEA ALC services and partner organisations.
- Full and open information about reasons for change should be given – and why senior managers are having to respond to a national 'quality agenda'.
- Effective interpersonal and information-giving skills can be used to try to overcome cynicism about consultation and change through a series of direct meetings to suit the arrangements of tutors (many of whom teach evening classes and work other unsocial hours).

People

- Alliances should be made with the supporters of change in the centre of a service and in other sections – through volunteer observers and tutors for OTL.
- Change has human consequences (stress, status, threat) and support should be offered – not all tutors and managers are confident about change.
- Roles and responsibilities should be clear in the change process.
- People working in flexible structures/systems can accommodate change more easily.
- Staff development implications of change should not be ignored and there is likely to be a need for stage 1 and stage 2 teacher training.

in ACL

Resources and costs

- Resource and cost implications should not be overlooked – for organisations and for tutors participating in OTL.

Aspects of change

- Introducing an OTL system will take time – this should be accepted.
- Change can have a ripple effect on other systems and planning – there may be unexpected implications for ACL providers.
- What is working well should be preserved (don't 'throw the baby out with the bathwater').
- Forward, long-term thinking should be encouraged.
- The reason for change should never be forgotten – and first principles returned to as often as necessary. OTL is a major strand in improving the practice of tutors in LEA ACL services and their partners so that the quality of learners' experiences are always high.
- The new or adapted system of OTL should be integrated with existing systems.
- The new system must be evaluated, monitored and reviewed.

Sources in writing this chapter have been Plunkett and Attner (1994), Dixon (1997), Stewart (1998) and Peeke (1999).

Applying theory to practice

A case study – Narnshire LEA

The case study is presented in the form of an implementation proposal and schedule. It is stressed that this is not the only way or the best way that change can be achieved, since all circumstances are very different, but it should give insights into the possibilities available.

The context

The shire county of Narnshire is one of great contrasts. Of its population, 25% live in its large rural development area, 40% in its four market towns, and 35% in the town of Narnchester. Total population is around half a million; its 19+ population is just under 400,000.

Narnchester is a large metropolitan district. It is divided into 26 wards, ranging from affluent wards in the central area to severely deprived areas in the east and west of the city. The adult population is declining. Narnchester narrowly missed becoming a unitary authority in 1997.

Unemployment is estimated at 5.5% across the county and 7.6% in Narnchester. Approximately 10% of the population have some form of disability or long-term limiting illness. Narnchester has an ethnic minority population of 4.1% (the county figure is 1.5%).

Educational attainment for school leavers is below the regional and national averages. Approximately 17.6% of adults have difficulty with reading and writing compared with 15% nationally. Most adult qualifications are achieved at NVQ level 2.

Overall levels of participation in learning by adults are estimated as low; however, there is little accurate comparative data to confirm this. Current participation by enrolments in LEA-supported adult learning is just under 8% of the adult population.

Narnshire LEA

In 2000 the county council identified raising educational achievement as its top priority. Although the primary focus has been on standards in statutory-age education, raising the skill levels of the adult population is an important dimension to achieving this priority. A new post of quality assurance manager has been established within the LEA's Lifelong Learning Team with a general brief to manage self-assessment across LEA ACL provision and that of its partners, and with a specific brief to introduce a system of OTL.

The Lifelong Learning division (headed by an assistant director of education) consists of four sections: Early Years Development and Childcare, Youth Service, Out of School Hours Learning, and Adult and Family Learning.

Narnshire LEA delivers adult continuing education provision in partnership with Narnchester's FE sector college, LEA maintained schools, and a consortium of community schools, libraries and voluntary organisations. It makes direct provision for family learning, adult basic skills and ESOL (English for speakers of other languages). LEA-supported adult continuing education provision is coordinated from the central Adult and Family Learning Team.

The Service Manager is the responsible officer within the LEA for managing contracts from the local LSC and other external funders, and to providers of mainstream adult education.

Details are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Contract holders for mainstream adult education

Provider	Area covered	Contract	Enrolments
Narnchester College of Further Education	The Narnchester district	£80,000	12,000
Brough Community School	Broughville town	£35,000	3,000
Tough Community College	Toughville town	£35,000	2,500
Lough Technology College	Loughville town	£35,000	2,000
Enough School	Enoughville town	£35,000	1,500
Vale of Slough Consortium of Community Colleges	Rural development area	£60,000	6,000
	Total	**£280,000**	**27,000**

Providers with contracts with the LEA recruit and directly manage staff who deliver the services (eg local managers, coordinators and tutors). These individuals may have other roles within the organisation they work for.

In addition, the Adult and Family Learning Team commissions provision from small voluntary sector providers on a bid basis. This accounts for an additional 1500 learners per annum and costs £20,000.

Figure 7 Report to the assistant director of lifelong learning and partner managers on

Rationale for OTL system

- The Learning and Skills Act 2000 requires all post-16 organisations delivering teaching and learning to produce annual SARs and development plans for local learning and skills councils.
- All these post-16 organisations and their contracted partners are subject to quadrennial inspections.
- The new arrangements put the learner at the heart of everything.
- Teaching and learning therefore have an even greater prominence than before.
- A system of OTL is required for ACL in the authority and its contracted partners to prove the quality of their work and so that they can 'continuously improve'.

Goal

To have a fully implemented and robust system of OTL operating in the LEA ACL service and partner organisations which will:

- be understood, accepted and 'owned' by all staff in the LEA and partner organisations
- build on the current LEA system and the expertise of the FE college partner, which already implements an OTL system
- integrate other quality systems used by partner organisations
- increase the professional expertise of tutors through developing their skills, knowledge and attitudes (especially their confidence, their application of equal opportunities policy and their receptivity to change)
- improve the overall quality of provision in the LEA and its partners
- contribute to the ethos and practice of continuous improvement
- complement or be integrated with OTL systems currently operating in some providers
- achieve observations of all new tutors within a term of starting and 100% of all tutors over a 3-year period.

the introduction of a system of OTL to ACL services within the authority and its partners

The main target

All tutors in the ACL service (direct provision and partners) will be observed on one occasion each over a 3-year period.

Table 2 Costing observation of teaching and learning and number of visits per observer

Number of full-time tutors	50
Number of part-time tutors teaching over 180 hours per year	150
Number of part-time tutors teaching less than 180 hours per year	150
Number of trained observers	20
Estimated hours for each observation process (based on 1 hour actual observation and 2 hours planning, including action planning)	3 hours
Overall cost per observation (including travel costs)	£50

Total tutors to be observed and number of visits: 350

Total hours of observation:
350 tutors × 3 hours per observation = 1050 hours

Total cost @ £50 per hour = £52,500

Cost over 3 years = £17,500 per year

Total number of visits per observer = 17.5

Approximate number of visits per year per observer = 6

Cost of 6-month schedule for introducing OTL system in ACL services in addition to normal costs: £5000

Note
It is probably more sensible to overestimate the hourly cost of OTL activity to take into account travel, pre-observation activity, post-observation activity and 18% on-costs of any hourly rate, and therefore £50 per hour overall is not unrealistic. It is a good starting point for establishing that an OTL system is not going to be cheap!

Table 3 Six-month schedule for introducing a system for OTL in ACL services

	By 1 October 2001
Organisation and partners	Quality manager presents schedule to head of lifelong learning and managers of partner organisations and gets approval
	Change leaders/'champions' identified – curriculum leaders, VCO liaison staff, departmental staff, centre heads
	OTL committee set up (quality manager and change agents – meeting no.1) (FE college quality manager co-opted for SAR and OTL expertise)
	Quality manager visits all ACL centres and partner centres
Observers	Observers identified, approved and selected according to established criteria (eg status in the organisation (course tutor/ leader or curriculum manager), teacher-trained, first degree or higher degree in education, tutor on C&G 730 or Certificate of Education programme, having D34 IV qualification)
Tutors	Tutors receive 'Top Quality' newsletter no. 1 covering: ■ the new quality arrangements ■ self-assessment – what it is and action organisation is required to make ■ observation of teaching and learning ■ call for volunteers for pilot.
Handbook	Research into structure and content includes: ■ schemes of work forms ■ session plan forms ■ observation forms ■ protocols etc.

	By 1 November 2001
Organisation and partners	Self-assessment report in progress
	Visit and advice from ACL consultant
	Consultation on process (not on need for process or otherwise!)
	Self-assessment and OTL on agenda of every LEA and partners' curriculum meetings
	Meeting no. 2 of OTL committee
	Change leaders start process in sub-units
	Identification of staff development needs
Observers	Training session no. 1 – the role of teaching and learning observation within the SAR process
Tutors	Tutors receive 'Top Quality' newsletter no. 2 covering: ■ what to expect and what it means to tutors ■ grading and the CIF ■ how to make your voice heard (consultation on staff views).
	Training for pilot volunteers
	General staff development day – equal opportunities, learning styles, classroom observation
Handbook	Development (including the use of models from other organisations)

	By 1 December 2001
Organisation and partners	Meeting no. 3 of OTL committee
	Self-assessment and OTL on agenda of every LEA and partners' curriculum meetings
	Self-assessment report drafted
	Start of implementation of staff development plan (including qualification for observers of teaching and learning)
	Consultation on the system for OTL and handbook
	Introduction of new contract for newly appointed tutors
Observers	Training session no. 2 – the OTL process, basic observation techniques
	Preparation for OTL pilot
Tutors	Tutors receive 'Top Quality' newsletter no. 3 covering: ■ the OTL handbook – overview and explanation, call for comments.
	Consultation questionnaire
	Training for pilot volunteers (including preparation for pilot)
Handbook	Completion of first draft of handbook

Table 3 continued

	By 1 January 2002
Organisation and partners	Meeting no. 4 of OTL committee
	Self-assessment and OTL on agenda of every LEA and partners' curriculum meetings
	Consultation feedback
	Pilot OTL starts
	Feedback from pilot
Observers	Training session no. 3 – OTL report writing and giving feedback
	Pilot OTL by teams of two observers
	Moderation meetings
	Feedback from pilot – observers' viewpoint
Tutors	Tutors receive 'Top Quality' newsletter no. 4 covering: ■ consultation feedback ■ volunteers' participation in pilot ■ feedback from pilot – volunteers' viewpoint.
Handbook	Second draft of handbook
	By 1 February 2002
Organisation and partners	Self-assessment and OTL on agenda of every LEA and partners' curriculum meetings
	Meeting no. 5 of OTL committee
	OTL starts organisation wide
Observers	Observers start 'caseloads' – percentage of paired observations
	Moderation of OTL feedback and grades
Tutors	All tutors currently teaching receive one OTL assessment and grade
	Tutors receive 'Top Quality' newsletter no. 5 covering: ■ How was it for you?
Handbook	Third draft agreed and sent to printer

	By 1 March 2002
Organisation and partners	Review of process (review conference?)
	Self-assessment and OTL on agenda of every LEA and partners' curriculum meetings
	Analysis of OTL results
	Results to SAR and development plan
	Identification of staff development needs – observers (accreditation?), tutors (initial teacher training?)
	Review of process and 'tweaking'
	Observation schedule for following academic year
Observers	Review of process
	Percentages of pilot grades (1–7) into the SAR and development plan to inform next year's OTL and SAR
Tutors	Review of process
	Tutors receive 'Top Quality' newsletter no. 6 covering: ▪ What has been learnt?
	All new tutors observed
	30% of all tutors in ACL LEA services and partner organisations observed
Handbook	Final version of handbook valid for 12 months (till next review)

The case study and management of change theory

The change in Narnshire LEA is 'process' and 'people centred' and therefore most appropriately led by the quality assurance manager with senior management support. You will notice that there is plenty of evidence of a stepped approach in the proposals to introduce an OTL system. The need for change is recognised in the rationale and the goal is clearly stated in eight different parts. The 'change agents' led by the quality manager are identified and generally the 'method of intervention' is strongly consultative. The importance of involving the quality manager at Narnchester College of Further Education is recognised by getting that person on the OTL committee. This person will have experience of self-assessment and a system of OTL and therefore the expertise required for the LEA. There is an implicit recognition that the change needs to be accepted by those who will be most directly affected. If change had been necessary on a shorter timescale then a more 'authoritarian' emphasis might have been required.

At this stage of self-assessment in the ACL sector, evidence that it is being addressed and that a strong OTL system is in prospect is a valid approach as Narnshire LEA does not have a fully operating system. There may be elements of democracy in the process, where volunteers are requested for the pilot OTL scheme from all the different centres and partners – especially at the end where changes would result from review. An 'authoritarian' emphasis can be discerned in the introduction of contracts requiring attendance at meetings and at staff development events. Similarly, there might be little negotiation in establishing who should undertake the observations in the OTL system (ie those with appropriate credibility conferred through qualifications and proven good practice), though a separate peer process could be much more flexible. The change is too complex and too important to allow a laissez-faire approach within outreach centres and partner organisations – and would be very patchy if it proceeded on these lines. Leadership is unequivocally required.

You will probably agree that the proposed change in Narnshire's schedule has a 'rationalist' feel to it with much communication offered through regular newsletters, curriculum meetings (where it is meant to be on the agenda every time), and a review conference. In addition, there is a strong 'learning organisation' orientation through the various staff development events for all those involved and even the offer of qualifications – for tutors and observers.

In terms of tactics, you probably get no sense of a small-scale change – it is a 'big bang' approach encompassing ACL services within the LEA and its partners. Similarly, change through a small unit as a model has not been adopted as an option. The emphasis on communication (through newsletters, meetings and training) is strong, as is target setting and team development. Introducing new contracts for new staff is a tactic that adds some steel to the implementation process. As Narnshire LEA and its partner organisations operate within 'role cultures' (ie hierarchies rather than more flexible webs, matrices or clusters) this should not be a difficult issue with proper preparation and explanation.

The generally consultative approach with its emphasis on participation by everyone, open, timely and honest communication, sensitivity and advance warning ought to overcome most resistance. The establishment of mutual trust, the ability of an organisation and its partners to learn and improve, and the ability to adapt should ensure success. Change is always recognised as being hard work requiring energy and commitment, but it is perhaps less stressful than a reactive approach.

If change fails, it can be for a number of reasons. In the example of this case study, there is probably little evidence of 'faulty thinking' but if the various 'milestones' in the schedule are neglected or there is slippage (ie loss of a 'task' focus) then the process can go awry. The initial goals may also be over ambitious.

As you read this and consider your own service and its partners, you may think that the key to the success of introducing an OTL system is resources and time. Will enough management time be allocated? Are there enough observers and potential observers for the system planned? Is there extra funding for conferences and staff development? How will the hours for the whole observation process be funded? Change does require proper investment of resources and, if they are not available, perhaps it is important to scale down the scope of the initial proposals so that funding them is a more modest undertaking.

Activity 5 A checklist for preliminary planning and a form for establishing targets for an

When you have examined the case study in terms of change management theory, consider using the checklist below (Figure 8) for preliminary planning of an OTL system in your organisation and its partners.

Figure 8 Planning and implementing an OTL system in your LEA ACL service
Refer to pages 19–28 and Figure 3 (page 21), 4 (page 22) and 9 (page 43) to help you complete this form

Following a 'force field analysis', what are the main factors working for and against change in your service? (see Figure 3)	Factors for Factors against
Why is change required in your organisation and in your partners'? (see Figure 4)	Reasons for change (why?)
What goals are you going to establish (what is to be achieved)? (see Figures 4 and 9)	Goals
How are you going to achieve the proposed change – what strategies, management styles and tactics will you use – or what combinations of them (see Figure 4)?	Strategies Styles Tactics

Who will be your 'change agents' or 'change champions'? (see Figure 4)	Name Designation and organisation Name Designation and organisation Name Designation and organisation Name Designation and organisation Name Designation and organisation
Explain your implementation plan (see Figure 4)	When, where and how are things to develop?
How will you monitor each stage of your implementation plan? (see Figure 4)	
Explain how you know your change procedure has been successful (evaluate the results) (see Figure 4)	
How do you intend to overcome possible resistance to your plan? (see pages 25–28)	

Activity 6 How to achieve and cost a system of OTL

Use Figure 9 to get some idea of how OTL can be achieved and how much it may cost. The possible targets in Figure 9 are not recommendations but to get you thinking about implications.

Work out the additional scenarios with your organisation in mind.

- **Every tutor will be observed in the first year of her or his employment.**
- **At least 30% of courses from every centre will have their tutors observed anually.**
- **A sample of tutors from every centre will have tutors observed anually.**
- **All observations will be carried out by staff trained as observers (this gives an idea, once the number of observations is established, of how many observations each observer will have to undertake).**

Now develop an OTL target and costings for your organisation.

Figure 9 Establishing and costing your initial target

	a Number of full-time tutors	**b** Number of part-time tutors teaching over 180 hours per year	**c** Number of part-time tutors teaching less than 180 hours per year	**d** Total number of hours for OTL system per annum *	**e** (= **£50 d**) Overall cost per annum **
1 Every tutor will be observed once in the next academic year $d = 3(a+b+c)$					
2 All tutors in the ACL service (direct provision and partners) will be observed on one occasion each over a 3-year rolling programme $d\,(\text{per annum}) = \frac{3(a+b+c)}{3}$					
3 All staff who teach 180 hours per annum or more will be observed in the next academic year $d = 3(a+b)$					

* Based on 1 hour actual observation and 2 hours planning including action planning – 3 hours per tutor observed

** Based on £50 per hour including travel and on-costs

Conclusion

As quality managers, you face many challenges in introducing or adapting a system of OTL to take into account the new arrangements. The booklet has established the context for having a system for OTL as part of the self-assessment and development planning process required by the new legislation. It has explained the process for OTL and the practicalities of doing it, including how OTL relates to the SAR. An overview of change management has led on to a case study to explain how the change required might be managed. We hope that this booklet has given you some guidelines and pointers about how you might proceed, and these will be backed up by all the services provided by the Adult and Community Learning Quality Support Programme.

References and bibliography

Note
Back-up material for this booklet and others in the series can be found on www.qualityACL.org.uk, including theory and frameworks for high quality observation.

Adult Learning Inspectorate. *Draft guidance on inspection for ACL providers – interpreting the Common Inspection Framework.* ALI website (www.ali.gov.uk), 2001.

Adult Learning Inspectorate/ES/LSC/Ofsted. *Raising standards in post-16 learning: self-assessment and development plans.* ALI/ES/LSC/Ofsted, 2001.

Adult Learning Inspectorate/Ofsted. *Common Inspection Framework.* ALI website (www.ali.gov.uk 'about inspections'), 2001a.

Adult Learning Inspectorate/Ofsted. *Inspection grading.* ALI website (www.ali.gov.uk 'about inspections'), 2001b.

Cohen L, Manion L. *A guide to teaching practice.* Routledge Falmer, 1989.

Curzon L. *Teaching in further education,* 4th ed. Cassell, 1990.

Dixon R. *The management task,* 2nd ed. Butterworth Heinemann, 1997.

Dixon S, with Moorse R. *Self-assessment in practice.* FEDA, 1998.

Dixon S, with Walker E. *Self-assessment for improvement.* FEDA, 2000.

Eldwick Research Associates. *Adult and community learning. What? Why? Who? Where? A literature review.* In Research Brief no. 262, DfES, 2001.

Foster P, Howard U, Reisenberger A. *A sense of achievement: outcomes of adult learning.* FEDA, 1997.

Greenwood M, Merton A, Taylor S. *Recognising and validating outcomes of non-accredited learning: a practical approach.* LSDA, 2001.

Kenway M, Reisenberger A. *Self-assessment and development planning for ACL providers.* LSDA, 2001.

Nicholls S. *Constructive observation – guidelines for trainers.* External Quality Review Consortium of Colleges, 2000.

Peeke G. *Typologies of resistance*. MBA lecture, FEDA, 1999.

Perrott E. *Effective teaching*. Longman, 1982.

Plunkett W, Attner R. *Introduction to management*. Wadsworth, 1994.

Rae WL. *The skills of training*. *Wildwood*, 1989.

Stewart DM. *Handbook of management skills*, 3rd ed. Gower, 1998.

Turner C. *Squaring the circle: funding non-accredited learning under the LSC*. NIACE, 2001.

Appendix 1 Buckinghamshire County Council OTL forms and guidance

TEACHING OBSERVATION REPORT

Course/group:		
Tutor:		Observer:
Session details:		
Session number/no. of sessions	Date:	Time of session:
Number on register: Number present:		Venue:
Evidence of follow up of absent students: Records of students' achievement:		

Planning	**Comments**

• clarity of aims/objectives/outcomes
• match of planned aims/objectives and outcomes to learners
• plans for individual and group learning:
  • informed by initial assessment
  • developed by tutors and learners together
  • reviewed and updated regularly
• planning sufficiently detailed to aid effective delivery and learning
• variety of delivery and assessment strategies planned
• use made of records of progress and achievement to inform future planning	

Effectiveness of teaching and learning	**Comments**
• tutor's knowledge/competence contributes to effective delivery and assessment • learners understand objectives • methods and styles used are consistent with programme aims and learners' personal objectives • learners are encouraged to develop the capacity to work independently • learners are acquiring new knowledge, developing ideas and increasing their understanding • learners understand what they are doing, how well they are doing, and how to improve • learners are challenged and inspired • evidence of good working relationships which foster learning • learners are active, apply effort to succeed,	

Appendix 1 continued

work productively and make effective use of time • tutor presents material in a way which is sensitive to issues of equal opportunity • resources promote effective teaching and learning • ICT is used to enhance learning where appropriate • health and safety is taken into account	
Assessment and monitoring of learners' progress	**Comments**
• assessment and recording are suitable for the course and the learners • assignments set when appropriate and marked in a way that helps learners to progress • assessment is fair, accurate and carried out regularly • assessment and feedback ensure that learners know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve • the accreditation chosen is appropriate	
Learner response and achievement	**Comments**
• learners are expected to attend regularly and be punctual • learners are stimulated and show interest and enthusiasm for learning and achievement • learners are acquiring new knowledge, skills, understanding and developing their ideas • learners are developing skills of critical evaluation, research and analysis • challenging learning goals are achieved • learners make significant progress towards achieving their goals • learners' achievements are recorded	
General evaluation of session	**Comments**
• Were the objectives/outcomes suitably challenging for the learners and met by them? • Were there any difficulties with learning identified? • Were these overcome? • Further comments on the overall effectiveness of session	

INDICATION OF SIGNIFICANT STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Please record here notable strengths, and weaknesses that need positive action for improvement. Agreed action should be recorded on the next page

	Significant strengths	Areas for development
Planning		
Effectiveness of teaching and learning		
Assessment and monitoring of learners' progress		
Learner response and achievement		
General evaluation of session		

Grade given by observer: [ ]

Appendix 1 continued

ACTION PLAN

Agreed action, including staff development identified

Action	By whom	By when

Signed:

Observer: _____

Tutor: _____ Date: _____

OBSERVING TEACHING AND LEARNING
GUIDANCE TO OBSERVERS

General guidance

Normally tutors will be observed by their own Tutor Coordinator, except where

- it is impossible because of course times
- another coordinator within the County Curriculum Area team has specific expertise which would be helpful in assessing the quality of teaching and learning
- previous 'history' suggests another member of staff may be more appropriate.

A copy of your provisional timetable for observation visits should be given to the Chair of your Subgroup, once it has been agreed with the Deputy Consortium Manager. It should included tutor's name, course, place, date and time (if the last two have yet to be confirmed, please indicate likely timing, eg 3rd/4th week February).

You should not discuss an individual tutor, or visit, with another tutor. The record should only be used for QA and professional development purposes, in accordance with the procedures specified here and in the QA framework: if a class visit is made because there are concerns regarding a tutor's capability, it should be made outside this QA framework.

Before the visit you should

- give tutors 2 weeks' notice of your intention to visit (so that they can tell their students that you will be visiting)
- send them a copy of the Information for Tutors, the 2001–2002 Observation Report, the Tutor Self-Evaluation form and the Tutor Comment sheet
- agree when and how you will feedback to them: wherever possible, this should be done face to face, but it is acknowledged that telephone may have to be used in some cases – feedback should normally take place 7–10 days after the observation
- confirm your likely level of involvement in the session (nb this should be as little as possible), the duration of the visit, and explore whether there will be an opportunity to talk to students
- find out from them a little bit about the course and the student group, and check whether there is anything else that they wish you to know.

During the visit

- it is suggested that you take notes, and complete the form afterwards – so that you concentrate on actually 'seeing' as much as possible: you should keep your notes
- any informal questioning of students should be done professionally, and in such a way that does not personalise issues to do with the tutor, or raises doubts in their minds about their course

Appendix 1 continued

- remember that 'you see what you look for' – so glancing at the prompts on the Observation Report form occasionally might be useful
- please ensure that you check that the tutor has a record of student achievement (for all courses – please refer to the Tutor Handbook for guidance given to tutors on record keeping)
- please check that non-attendance has been followed up in line with the service policy.

Completing the Observation Report

- you do not need to comment about every prompt on the form – but do give the relevant example if you do observe evidence that relates to a prompt
- other comments you may wish to make about good practice, or poor..., should be included in the section with the most relevant heading – it doesn't matter if there is not actually a related prompt
- you should only make judgements for which you have evidence – either observed, or documented
- you will grade what you see – regardless of what you know about the tutor's performance on other occasions (although it is suggested that you make an appropriate note in the 'General evaluation' section)
- you should complete all sections of the form, except the general evaluation section at the end – this would allow you to record anything which arose from your feedback conversation which you thought appropriate to record (eg perhaps a high level of self-awareness of things which had not gone well, and an understanding of how they could be improved)
- the grade should directly follow through from what you have recorded on the form – eg if you have recorded evidence of some really good practice alongside a few (not major) things which could have been better – you award a 2.

During feedback

- ensure that the tutor leaves you a completed Self-Evaluation form
- complete and agree the Action Plan* together
- ensure that you have both signed the forms
- remind them to complete the Tutor Comment sheet and send it in.

*The Action Plan might include, for example, simple provision of information, identifying appropriate ongoing support, specific staff development needs: there is no need to produce a lengthy action plan for the sake of it!

Hopefully it will never arise, but if the tutor should seriously dispute the grade, in spite of your careful recording of evidence, invite them to write to your Consortium Manager detailing their concerns. If necessary, the normal County Council Grievance Procedure would apply.

You are welcome to use an electronic version of the form: it is suggested that you try to keep the Teaching Observation Report as a maximum of four pages, and therefore if you expand one section you would probably contract another.

Afterwards

Please take two copies of the original Observation Report and Tutor Self-Evaluation form – retain one yourself for your Quality Assurance file, return one to the tutor for

their Personal Development and Learning Record (PDLR) file – and send the originals to the Continuing Education HR Officer at County Hall, for the tutor's personnel file.

Moderation of grade
You will be asked to bring your copy to a designated Curriculum SubGroup meeting for moderation.

Grading criteria

Please note that Grades 1 and 2 should not be awarded for provision that meets standards which would normally be expected of all teachers.

Particularly bear in mind the key evaluation questions from the draft Common Inspection Framework:

How effective are teaching, training and learning?
- How well teaching and training meet individuals' needs and the course or programme requirements
- How well learners learn and make progress

How well do learners achieve?
- Success in achieving challenging targets, including agreed learning goals and qualifications
- The standards of learners' work and their progress towards targets
- The development of personal and learning skills

How effective are the assessment and monitoring of learners' progress?
- The rigour of assessment
- The uses of assessment in planning learning and monitoring progress

Grade 1	***excellent***
Grade 2	***very good***
Grade 3	***good***
Grade 4	***satisfactory***
Grade 5	***unsatisfactory***
Grade 6	***poor***
Grade 7	***very poor***

Further guidance on what are the characteristics of practice indicated by the above descriptors will be developed during the Autumn Term 2001.

TEACHING OBSERVATION – INFORMATION FOR TUTORS

The purpose of observing and grading teaching is to:

a) support professional development, through identifying staff development needs and opportunities for improving and developing practice

b) provide evidence of the quality of our provision.

Before the visit you should

- be given 2 weeks' notice of the intended visit
- have had the opportunity to give the observer some information about the course and the students they will be observing
- have agreed arrangements for receiving feedback after the visit
- receive a copy of the (revised) Teaching Observation Record 2000–2001, a Tutor Self-Evaluation form and a Tutor Comment sheet.

The following records should be made available to the observer when they visit

- Course register
- Course information sheet
- Syllabus, or other course documentation if an externally accredited course (copy of document if a CROCN course)
- Scheme of work
- Session plan
- Session plans/records of sessions which have already taken place
- Records of students' progress

Afterwards

Before receiving feedback, please complete the Tutor Self-Evaluation form – if you are not sure what to include in each section, you may find it helpful to look at the prompts on the Observation Report which the observer completes.

During the feedback session, your observer will go through your self-evaluation with you, and go through their comments on the Observation Report, and then agree with you any appropriate action to follow up the observation.

After receiving feedback, please complete and return the Tutor Comment sheet.

Grading criteria

Please note that Grades 1 to 2 will not be awarded for provision that meets standards which would normally be expected of all teachers.

Observers are particularly asked to bear in mind the key evaluation questions from the draft Common Inspection Framework:

How effective are teaching, training and learning?

- How well teaching and training meet individuals' needs and the course or programme requirements
- How well learners learn and make progress

How well do learners achieve?

- Success in achieving challenging targets, including agreed learning goals an qualifications
- The standards of learners' work and their progress towards targets
- The development of personal and learning skills

How effective are the assessment and monitoring of learners' progress ?

- The rigour of assessment
- The uses of assessment in planning learning and monitoring progress

Grade 1	***excellent***
Grade 2	***very good***
Grade 3	***good***
Grade 4	***satisfactory***
Grade 5	***unsatisfactory***
Grade 6	***poor***
Grade 7	***very poor***

Further guidance on what are the characteristics of practice indicated by the above descriptors will be developed during the Autumn Term 2001.

Appendix 1 continued

Buckinghamshire Continuing Education

OBSERVATION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING
TUTOR SELF-EVALUATION

Course / Group:		
Tutor:		Observer:
Venue:	Date:	Time of Session:

Please record here what you felt to be notable strengths, and weaknesses that need positive action for improvement, in the session which was observed.

	Significant Strengths	Areas for Development
Planning		
Effectiveness of teaching and learning		
Assessment & monitoring of students' progress		
Learner response and achievement		
General Evaluation		

Signed:

Tutor: _____ Date: _____

TEACHING OBSERVATION – TUTOR COMMENT SHEET

Please return the completed form to Strategic Manager for Programmes & Quality at County Hall. Continuing Education,4th Floor County Hall, Aylesbury, Bucks HP20 1UZ – or hand it in to your Consortium Office to be forwarded.

Tutor:	
Observed By:	
Course title / group:	
Consortium:	Venue:
Date of Observation:	Time of Observation:
Grade:	

Did you feel that the comments made by your assessor were fair?
If no, please explain why

Were there any problems using the forms?
If yes, please explain

How long did you spend talking to your assessor when he/she gave you feedback?

Was this face to face, or by telephone?

Has your teaching changed in any way since the observation?

In what way, if any, could the observation have been more helpful?

Signed: Date:

Please add any further comments which you wish to add to the reverse of this sheet, including continuation of any of the above where necessary.

Appendix 2 Session plans – original and revised to address CIF questions

Narnshire CC Adult and Community Learning Session Plan

Course/Programme:	**Date:**	**Learners:**
Session Number:	**Time:**	**Duration:**
Title of session:	**Topic:**	**Previous knowledge:**

Aim(s)	Content	Tutor/learner activity	Resources	Time
Learning outcomes				

Health and safety factors	Assessment	Self evaluation

Namshire CC Adult and Community Learning Session Plan

Course/Programme:	**Date:**	**Learners:**
Session Number:	**Time:**	**Duration:**
Title of session:	**Topic:**	**Previous knowledge:**

Aim(s):
Learning outcomes:

Organisation of classroom/space during session (diagram)	**How all learners will be included in learning activities**	**How different learners' learning styles will be addressed**
Layout 1		
Layout 2		
Layout 3		

Content	Tutor/learner activity	Resources	Time

How did the session go? (Address these questions briefly) How well did the learners achieve the outcomes (and were they challenged)? How much progress did they make? How satisfactory and safe were the resources (room, specialist equipment, materials etc.)? How effectively did you assess the learning? How far did you meet learners' interests? How effectively did you give individual guidance? How did you deal with lateness, non-attendance and poor performance?	Self evaluation

Appendix 3 Pre-observation meeting form

Narnshire CC Adult and Community Learning

Observation of Teaching and Learning

Pre-observation planning meeting between tutor and observer

Tutor	
Observer	
Time	
Date	

Details of session to be observed (date, time, location, session number)	

Background information

Checklist of what will be required

Course register	
Course information sheet	
Syllabus or other course documentation	
Scheme of work	
Session plan	
Records of previous sessions	
Records of students' progress	

Date, time and location for feedback (if not immediately post-session)	

Signed (tutor):
Signed (observer):
Date:

adult and community learning
quality support programme

Adult and community services need to meet the challenges of the new post-16 learning sector, which puts 'the learner at the heart of everything'. A system for observing teaching and learning is a powerful means of achieving this and raising quality throughout the sector.

This guide describes the process of observing teaching and learning and how it can be managed. It is designed to inform senior managers, managers responsible for quality and curriculum leaders. It can also be used to support staff training and to help design internal documents and procedures.

ISBN 1 85338 712 6

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

NOTICE

Reproduction Basis

X	This document is covered by a signed "Reproduction Release (Blanket)" form (on file within the ERIC system), encompassing all or classes of documents from its source organization and, therefore, does not require a "Specific Document" Release form.
	This document is Federally-funded, or carries its own permission to reproduce, or is otherwise in the public domain and, therefore, may be reproduced by ERIC without a signed Reproduction Release form (either "Specific Document" or "Blanket").